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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 /075 W
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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3997

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: SHUM MO
SUBJECT: HUNGER STRIKE IN KENITRA AND CASABLANCA PRISONS ENDS:
PARLIAMENTARY CALL FOR RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

REF RABAT 7057

1. MINISTRY OF JUSTICE ISSUED COMMUNIQUE LATE DECEMBER 23 ANNOUNCING END OF HUNGER STRIKE IN KENITRA PRISON. COMMUNIQUE WAS CARRIED IN ISTIQLAL'S L'OPINION ON DECEMBER 25. AFP DECEMBER 23 IN ADDITION REPORTED THAT THE THREE PRISONERS ON HUNGER STRIKE IN CASABLANCA HAD ALSO ENDED THEIR STRIKE.

2. THE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT FOLLOWED FORMATION OF SPECIAL COMMITTE OF INQUIRY ON DECEMBER 22 CHARGED WITH MAKING CONTACT WITH THE HUNGER STRIKERS IN KENITRA PRISON AND HEARING THEIR GRIEVANCES. AFP NOTED THAT THESE "MARXIST-LENINIST" EXTREME LEFTISTS HAD BEEN ON HUNGER STRIKE SINCE NOVEMBER 9. THE COMMITTEE, COMPOSED OF 16 PERSONS, INCLUDED MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, JUDGES, LAWYERS, DOCTORS, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE "MOROCCAN FEDERATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN." GROUP REPORTEDLY HEARD A REPORT FROM MINISTER OF JUSTICE MAATI BOUABID ON GOM EFFORTS TO END THE STRIKE, AND ONCE THE MEMBERS HAD MET WITH THE PRISONERS, THE LATTER DECIDED TO END THEIR STRIKE IMMEDIATELY, ACCORDING
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TO THE COMMUNIQUE. THE COMMITTEE ALSO MET WITH HOSPITALIZED PRISONERS, FINDING NONE IN AN ALARMING STATE. THE COMMUNIQUE CONCLUDED THAT TALKS WITH THE PRISONERS WOULD CONTINUE IN ORDER TO SEEK SOLUTIONS TO UNRESOLVED PROBLEMS. (SEE REFTEL FOR PRIVATE COMMENTS OF MINISTER OF JUSTICE.)

2. MEANWHILE, ACCORDING TO SEMI-OFFICIAL LE MATIN DECEMBER 26,

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THE QUESTION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS WAS RAISED IN PARLIAMENT ON DECEMBER 24. DURING DEBATE ON BUDGET, ALI YATA, LEADERS OF PARTY OF PROGRESS AND SOCIALISM (COMMUNIST), EXPRESSED SATISFACTION OVER RECENT RELEASES OFPOLITICAL PRISONERS (RABAT 6531), EVEN THOUGH SOME OF THEM WERE EXTREME LEFTISTS WHOSE IDEOLOGY THE PPS OPPOSED. HE WENT ON TO CALL FOR THE RELEASE OF REMAINING POLITICAL PRISONERS, AS WELL AS THE RIGHT OF EXILES TO RETURN TO MOROCCO. DEPUTIES FROM THE PRO-GOVERNMENT ACTION PARTY AND THE POPULAR MOVEMENT ALSO HOPED FOR FURTHER PROGRESS ON THIS ISSUE. ISTIQLAL SPOKESMAN ABDELKRIM GHALLAB COMMENTED THAT THE CURRENT POLITICAL "OPENING" SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY MEASURES IN FAVOR OF POLITICAL PRISONERS STILL UNDER DETENTION. SPOKESMAN KACIMI OF THE INDEPENDENTS THEN EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CONDEMNING "ADVENTURIST ACTS." THE PRESIDENT OF PARLIAMENT, DEY OULD SIDI BABA, CONCLUDED THE DISCUSSION WITH HOPE THAT THE PROBLEM WOULD BE TAKEN UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE GOVERNMENT OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING.

3. COMMENT: THE GOM'S CONCERN IS CLEARLY REFLECTED IN ITS ACTIVE EFFORTS TO END PRISON HUNGER STRIKE AND ITS INTENTION TO DEAL FURTHER WITH PRISONERS' GRIEVANCES. THE RECENT COMMENTS IN PARLIAMENT ALSO POINT TO A BROAD CONCENSUS THERE IN FAVOR OF MORE SWEEPING ACTION ON THE POLITICAL PRISONER ISSUE. A GROWING BELIEF APPEARS TO BE DEVELOPING IN OFFICIAL AND NON-OFFICIAL CIRCLES THAT IT IS TIME TO RESOLVE THE POLITICAL
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PRISONER ISSUE, TO REINFORCE BOTH INCIPIENT PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT AND NATIONAL UNITY IN THE FACE OF EXTERNAL THREATS.
ANDERSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition Reason:
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